

Russia Faces Possible Rio Olympics Ban if Doping Claims Proved

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A woman walks into the head office for the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in Montreal, Canada.

The entire Russian squad could be banned from the upcoming Olympics Games in Brazil if claims of government-backed doping are proved, the President of the International Olympics Committee (IOC) said today.

The announcement follows allegations of a state-backed doping program made in an interview by the former head of the Moscow anti-doping lab, Grigory Rodchenkov.

Rodchenkov implicated 15 Russian Sochi Olympic champions in the doping program when speaking to The New York Times on May 12.

“The recent allegations against the anti-doping laboratory in Sochi are very detailed and therefore very worrying,” said IOC President Thomas Bach in a speech published online.

“Should the investigation prove the allegations true it would represent a shocking new

dimension in doping with an, until now, unprecedented level of criminality,” he said.

“There can be no doubt that the IOC would react with its record of proven zero tolerance policy. This action could range from lifelong Olympic bans for any implicated person, to tough financial sanctions, or the exclusion of entire National [Olympic] Federations.”

“This we owe to all the clean athletes around the globe. This we owe to our Olympic Values.”

The Russian Ministry of Sport published an official letter to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), pledging their full support and cooperation with any investigation, the R Sport news website reported Wednesday.

The letter also stressed that “responsibility should be personal. Clean sportsmen, who have spent years of their lives dedicated to training and have followed all the rules and regulations should not be denied the opportunity to participate in the next games.”

A number of new measures have been put in place against doping at the Rio games, including the separation of the anti-doping system from sports organizations and the delegation of anti-doping sanctions to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

Samples from the games at Beijing and London were also chosen to be re-tested using the latest scientific methods. The results could ban dozens of athletes from the upcoming games.

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